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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the evaluations completed on the performance of teacher education students in field experiences in the freshman and senior years at Clemson University (Clemson, South Carolina). Student self-evaluations are compared with ratings of the public school supervisors. The study included 174 students who identified their specific strengths and weaknesses at the end of their field experience by means of a rating scale. In addition, 198 classroom supervisors used the same instrument to assess the students' performance. The surveys were compared to determine whether there were significant differences in the supervisors' evaluations and in the students' perceptions of their own performance in the classroom. Findings indicated that there appeared to be a very high correlation in the perceptions of both supervisors and student teachers. There was agreement on the importance of quality field experiences as a major variable in teacher relationships and student development. Although the results of the study did not give cause for major concern, they suggested some ways of improving the present experience. (JD)

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ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE OF FIELD EXPERIENCES

AT CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

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A PAPER PRESENTED TO THE ASSOCIATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
FEBRUARY, 1989

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INTRODUCTION

Due to a national trend in teacher education with emphasis on product-outcome-indicators, the evaluation of students in field experiences is becoming more objective with performance being measured in behavioral terms. The research evidence that attempts to measure the effectiveness of field experiences seems contradictory and inconclusive even though 99 percent of teacher education institutions offer field experiences. However, recent empirical studies have supported the national advocacy of field experiences. Bartos and Souter (2) concluded that early practicum experiences had a positive impact on the students in schools where they were placed. Austin-Martin-, Bull and Molrine (1) found support "that a pre-student teaching experience positively affects propective teachers interpersonal skills." Sunal (6) concluded that students with field experiences can "more adequately model specific teacher roles when asked to do so." Morris and Pannell (5) found "that parental opinions about their children's experiences with student teachers are primarily positive." Henry (4) reported in Action in Teacher Education, 1988, that "it seems reasonable to continue and even accelerate, exploratory field experiences while at the same time evaluate their impact and schedule them so that the greatest amount of learning can occur."

PURPOSE

This presentation will review the evaluations completed on the performance of teacher education students in field experiences in the freshman and senior years at Clemson University. Student self-evaluating will be compared with ratings of the public school supervisors.

This survey research project relates to the current ATE concern with measuring performance in field experiences in behavioral terms, designating clinical schools as teacher education laboratories and meeting recent demands of accreditation standards on evaluation of field-laboratory experiences.

METHODOLOGY

The population of this study consisted of secondary and elementary field experience students at Clemson University, Fall Semester of 1988. A total of 174 students and 198 supervisory teachers were involved in the study. The surveys were compared to determine whether there were significant differences in the supervisors' evaluations and in the students' perceptions of their own performance in the classrooms. To secure student perceptions and supervisor evaluations, a rating scale was developed which listed teaching skills identified from course syllabi and the State of South Carolina teacher evaluation instrument, the APT. The scale was administered to students at the conclusion of the semester. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. (A copy of the survey and directions is found in the appendix.) The scale assessed the students' ability to perform such skills.

The data did not lend themselves to traditional statistical measures. After investigation of these data, the investigators became aware that it would be more interesting, and meaningful to the reader to tabulate the number and percentage of items marked. Percentages were rounded to whole numbers for clarity of presentation.

DATA ANALYSIS

This study included 174 students who identified their specific strengths and weaknesses at the end of their field experience by means of a Rating Scale. In addition, 198 classroom supervisors used the same instrument to assess the students' performance in the field experience.

Table 1 contains a summary of responses for each item on the Rating Scale in Freshmen Orientation as perceived by students and supervisory teachers.

TABLE 1 (FRESHMEN)

Percent of Responses to Each Item on the Rating Scale
In Freshman Orientation

ITEM	PERCENT OF RESPONSES Students SA	A	NAD	D	SD	Supervisory Teachers SA	A	NAD	D	SD
1. Was punctual in attendance.	80	18	2	0	0	80	15	1	5	1
2. Provided appropriate personal data about myself.	49	20	25	0	0	48	32	15	8	3
3. Dressed neatly and wore appropriate clothes.	92	8	0	0	0	81	15	1	3	0
4. Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm.	71	29	0	0	0	50	31	8	8	1
5. Followed professional ethics in regard to school, pupils, and the supervising teacher.	80	18	2	0	0	65	24	4	4	0
6. Showed flexibility and a positive attitude.	82	18	0	0	0	60	28	8	2	0
7. Gave evidence of advanced planning and preparation for the field experience.	42	25	26	0	0	29	15	37	13	2
8. Communicated orally and in writing without frequent errors.	52	18	17	2	0	41	19	32	4	2
9. Role Modeled Courtesy and respect.	82	18	0	0	0	66	28	1	3	0
10. Showed initiative in assisting the supervising teacher in a variety of tasks.	74	20	2	2	0	47	21	14	17	2
11. Learned the names of the students as needed.	38	35	17	2	2	34	27	28	6	2
12. Demonstrated patience and poise when working with students.	68	20	5	0	0	52	23	22	1	1
13. Handled routine tasks efficiently.	77	20	2	0	0	54	27	4	2	3
14. Used methods of positive reinforcement to praise students.	57	20	15	0	0	32	32	31	3	0
15. Showed confidence in myself.	72	26	0	0	0	53	37	4	4	1

SA - Strongly Agree
A - Agree
NAD - Neither Agree nor Disagree
SD - Strongly Disagree

When students' percentages were examined, the supervisory teachers' ratings concurred with the students' findings that this group of freshmen was punctual in attendance, dressed neatly and wore appropriate clothes, followed professional ethics in regard to school, pupils and the supervisory teacher, showed flexibility and a positive attitude, role modeled courtesy and respect, and handled routine tasks efficiently. Also, student ratings supported the teachers' findings that evidence of advanced planning and preparation for the field experiences was needed. In 1988, the authors (3) cited this conclusion in a related study.

The data in table 2 indicate that items 1,3,5, 6, 9 and 14 were viewed as strengths by students and teachers alike. The data do not suggest negative performance for this group of elementay field experience students. The responses identified strengths rather than weaknesses.

TABLE 2 (JUNIOR)

Percent of Responses to each Item on the Rating Scale in Elementary Field Experience.

ITEM	Percent of Responses Students SA	A	NAD	D	SD	Supervisory Teachers SA	A	NAD	D	SD
1. Was punctual in attendance.	73	27	0	0	0	96	0	0	1	0
2. Provided appropriate personal data about myself.	57	27	7	0	0	78	17	1	0	0
3. Dressed neatly and wore appropriate clothes.	83	13	3	0	0	91	1	0	0	0
4. Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm.	60	33	3	3	0	65	22	1	1	0
5. Followed professional ethics in regard to school, pupils, and the supervising teacher.	77	23	0	0	0	83	13	0	4	0
6. Showed flexibility and a positive attitude.	77	23	0	0	0	87	9	4	0	0
7. Gave evidence of advanced planning and preparation for the field experience.	47	50	3	0	0	74	17	9	0	0
8. Communicated orally and in writing without frequent errors.	50	47	3	0	0	70	30	0	0	0
9. Role modeled courtesy and respect.	80	20	0	0	0	87	13	0	0	0
10. Showed initiative in assisting the supervising teacher in a variety of tasks.	57	37	3	3	0	78	22	0	0	0
11. Learned the names of the students as needed.	47	47	3	3	0	74	17	9	0	0
12. Demonstrated patience and poise when working with students.	67	33	0	0	0	78	13	9	0	0
13. Handled routine tasks efficiently.	70	27	3	0	0	78	17	4	0	0
14. Used methods of positive reinforcement to praise students.	77	23	0	0	0	70	17	13	0	0
15. Showed confidence in myself.	37	53	3	7	0	65	30	4	0	0

SA - Stongly Agree
A - Agree
NAD - Neither Agree nor Disagree
D - Disagree
SD - Strongly Disagree

Responses in Table 3 indicated strengths for this group of secondary methods students in the following areas: modeling courtesy and respect, following professional ethics, dressing appropriately, and being punctual in attendance.

TABLE 3 (JUNIOR- SENIOR)

Percent of Responses to each Item on the Rating Scale in Secondary Methods by Students and Supervisory Teachers.

ITEM	Percent of Responses Students SA	A	NAD	D	SD	Supervisory Teachers SA	A	NAD	D	SD
1. Was punctual in attendance.	86	15	0	0	0	89	9	0	0	0
2. Provided appropriate personal data about myself.	66	29	5	2	0	62	32	6	0	0
3. Dressed neatly and wore appropriate clothes.	80	20	0	0	0	92	6	0	0	0
4. Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm.	61	34	5	0	0	75	21	0	0	0
5. Followed professional ethics in regard to school, pupils, and the supervising teacher.	85	14	2	0	0	87	11	0	0	0
6. Showed flexibility and a positive attitude.	85	15	2	0	0	75	23	0	0	0
7. Gave evidence of advanced planning and preparation for the field experience.	71	27	2	0	0	70	30	0	0	0
8. Communicated orally and in writing without frequent errors.	61	36	3	2	0	74	19	4	0	0
9. Role modeled courtesy and respect.	83	15	2	0	0	91	8	0	0	0
10. Showed initiative in assisting the supervising teacher in a variety of tasks.	53	32	15	0	0	58	30	9	0	0
11. Learned the names of the students as needed.	56	41	5	2	0	58	30	9	0	0
12. Demonstrated patience and poise when working with students.	75	20	3	2	0	77	19	2	0	0
13. Handled routine tasks efficiently.	75	22	5	0	0	72	21	6	0	0
14. Used methods of positive reinforcement to praise students.	64	32	4	0	0	64	26	7	0	0
15. Showed confidence in myself.	53	41	5	2	0	60	36	2	0	0

SA - Stongly Agree
A - Agree
NAD - Neither Agree nor Disagree
D - Disagree
SD - Strongly Disagree

Showing initiative in assisting the supervisory teacher in a variety of tasks and learning the names of the students were competencies which needed improvement.

Since a large number of field placements can be overwhelming at times, it is not surprising that expectations, desired outcomes and communication causes some concern for students and supervisory teachers alike.

Table 4 reveals that student teachers were puncual in attendance, dressed appropriately, followed professional ethics, modeled courtesy-respect, learned students' names and used methods of positive reinforcement to praise students.

TABLE 4 (SENIOR)

Percent of Responses to each Item on the Rating Scale in Student Teaching by Students and Supervisory Teachers.

ITEM	Percent of Responses Students SA	A	NAD	D	SD	Supervisory Teachers SA	A	NAD	D	SD
1. Was punctual in attendance.	90	10	0	0	0	27	81	1	0	0
2. Provided appropriate personal data about myself.	75	25	0	0	0	89	7	0	0	0
3. Dressed neatly and wore appropriate clothes.	85	15	0	0	0	93	0	0	0	0
4. Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm.	60	35	5	0	0	78	11	4	0	0
5. Followed professional ethics in regard to school, pupils, and the supervising teacher.	90	10	0	0	0	85	7	0	0	0
6. Showed flexibility and a positive attitude.	70	15	5	0	0	81	11	0	0	0
7. Gave evidence of advanced planning and preparation for the field experience.	80	20	0	0	0	85	7	0	0	0
8. Communicated orally and in writing without frequent errors.	80	15	0	5	0	81	11	0	0	0
9. Role modeled courtesy and respect.	85	15	0	0	0	89	4	0	0	0
10. Showed initiative in assisting the supervising teacher in a variety of tasks.	85	15	0	0	0	78	15	0	0	0
11. Learned the names of the students as needed.	90	10	0	0	0	81	11	0	0	0
12. Demonstrated patience and poise when working with students.	70	25	0	0	0	74	19	0	0	0
13. Handled routine tasks efficiently.	80	20	0	0	0	85	7	0	0	0
14. Used methods of positive reinforcement to praise students.	90	5	5	0	0	81	11	0	0	0
15. Showed confidence in myself.	60	40	0	0	0	97	3	0	0	0

SA - Stongly Agree
A - Agree
NAD - Neither Agree nor Disagree
D - Disagree
SD - Strongly Disagree

In a recent study (3) suggesting the need for improved discipline, better written communication, improved planning and greater knowledge of subject matter, this group of student teachers showed competency in basic preparation in these areas.

Strengths idenitified by teachers may be used to help improve instructional practices that may lead to more success in field-laboratory experiences. The data seem to suggest generally that since field experiences are common to most teacher education programs and student teaching is central to the program, a fuller understanding of this positive experience on the qualities of student teachers and the students they teach is needed.

SUMMARY

This survey indicates that field experience is a positive, worthwhile endeavor. Because of the importance of quality field experiences as a major variable in teacher relationships and student development, this appears to be a highly desirable outcome. This study also suggested that supervisory teachers preceived the major strengths of field experience students as a significant part of thier development. This again appears to be a desirable outcome since the supervisory teacher is becoming a more adequately prepared person in recent years through courses, workshops, seminars and mandated national-state supervisory programs.

Although the results of the study did not give cause for major concern, they suggested some ways of improving the present experience.

Perhaps the most favorable finding of the study is that there appeared to be a very high correlation in the preceptions of both supervisors and student teachers.

APPENDIX

REFERENCES

1. Austin-Martin, George; Bull, Diana; and Molrine, Charlotte. "A Study of the Effectiveness of a Pre-Student Teaching Experience in Promoting Positive Attitudes toward Teaching," Peabody Journal of Education, April, 1981, 148-153.

2. Bartos, Robert, and Souter, Floyd, "The Impact of Early Practicum Students on Public Schools," paper presented at ATE Convention, February, 1981.

3. Freeze, C.R., Buckner, S.L., Olive, Ed., Brooks, D., "Assessment of Performance in Teaching of Student Teachers," ERIC, SP 029713, June, 1988, 1-10.

4. Henry, Marvin, "The Effect of Increased Exploratory Field Experiences Upon the Perceptions and Performance of Student Teachers," Action In Teacher Education, 1988, 93-97.

5. Morris, John, and Pannell, Sue, K., "Parental Opinions About Student Teachers," The Teacher Educator, Autumn, 1987, 21-27.

6. Sunal, Dennis W., "A Comparison of Two Pre-Professional Programs in the Department of Early Childhood Elementary Education," University of Maryland, ERIC, ED 139624, 1976.

APPENDIX

College of Education
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

November 13, 1988

TO: Classroom Supervisors of ED 400/401 Students

FROM: Carolyn Briscoe, Director of Field Experiences

SUBJECT: Rating Survey of ED 400/401 Students

The purpose of the enclosed rating scan sheet is to gather information about students enrolled in field experiences at all levels of the teacher preparation program at Clemson University. ED 400 is the third of four field experiences for prospective teachers and usually occurs during the second semester of the junior year or the first semester of the senior year for early childhood and elementary education majors. The same survey is being distributed to a sampling of classroom teachers and Clemson students in the first, second, and fourth (student teaching) phases of the program.

The results of the survey will be discussed at a National Meeting of Teacher Educators in St. Louis in February 1989. Drs. Brooks, Buckner, Olive, Freeze, and I will be participating in the meeting.

This is **not** an evaluation form and will in no way be used in the assigning of grades. You will note that the student's name is not used, nor is yours. The students will rate themselves in their class session on campus.

Please mark each item on the scan sheet using a #2 lead pencil. Place the marked scan sheet in the brown envelope, seal it, and allow the student to return it to my office via Mrs. Williams, the graduate assistant who is working with them.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Enclosure

TILLMAN HALL • CLEMSON SOUTH CAROLINA 29634-0709 • TELEPHONE 803/656 3482

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FEED IN THIS DIRECTION

SURVEY MARKING INSTRUCTIONS
- Use a No. 2 Pencil
- Fill circles completely
- Erase cleanly

SURVEY NAME

	Y	N	
1	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Was punctual in attendance.
2	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Provided appropriate personal data about myself.
3	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Dressed neatly and wore appropriate clothes.
4	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Demonstrated appropriate enthusiasm.
5	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Followed professional ethics in regard to the school, pupils, and the supervising teacher.
6	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Showed flexibility and a positive attitude.
7	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Gave evidence of advanced planning and preparation for the field experience.
8	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Communicated orally and in writing without frequent errors.
9	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Role Modeled courtesy and respect.
10	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Showed initiative in assisting the supervising teacher in a variety of tasks.
11	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Learned the names of the students as needed.
12	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Demonstrated patience and poise when working with students.
13	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Handled routine tasks efficiently.
14	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Used methods of positive reinforcement to praise students.
15	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Showed confidence in myself.
16	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	
17	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	
18	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	
19	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	
20	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	

STUDENT'S COPY

A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Neither Agree nor Disagree
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

A	B	C
0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

SURVEY NUMBER

SURVEY B
Form No. 19637

NATIONAL COMPUTER SYSTEMS

REFERENCES

1. Austin-Martin, George; Bull, Diana; and Molrine, Charlotte. " A Study of the Effectiveness of a Pre-Student Teaching Experience in Promoting Positive Attitudes toward Teaching," Peabody Journal of Education, April, 1981, 148-153.

2. Bartos, Robert, and Souter, Floyd, "The Impact of Early Practicum Students on Public Schools," paper presented at ATE Convention, February, 1981.

3. Freeze, C.R., Buckner, S.L., Olive, Ed., Brooks, D., "Assessment of Performance in Teaching of Student Teachers," ERIC, SP 029713, June, 1988, 1-10.

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5. Morris, John, and Pannell, Sue, K., "Parental Opinions About Student Teachers," The Teacher Educator, Autumn, 1987, 21-27.

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